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of the Athenians, for these same traits appear in the tragedians". It takes three fixed points to determine the position of a circle, and in my opinion Professor Murray needs the following three points: a people who did not have these revolting customs, a people who had also control of the poems of Homer, and, not least, the absence of these customs from these poems. Now, as he has no one of these points, it is waste labor to criticize the size or the shape of his circle.

The conclusion reached by Mr. Lang is that the Iliad and the Odyssey are, in the main, the work of a single poet, and that they describe a coherent culture, a culture which existed for a brief period not far from 1200 B. C.

The range and grasp of the book are remarkable, and show not only command of the most diverse literatures, traditions, myths, and customs, but an expert knowledge of the questions involved which might abash a specialist.

When Mr. Lang wrote his first book on Homer he was wellnigh alone in his belief in the unity of Homeric authorship, but times have changed in fifteen years, so that now he has as companions such men as Arthur Evans and T. W. Allen in England, and Ludwich, Drerup, Muelder, and Rothe in Germany. In fact what was then only a heresy may now be considered the orthodox belief.

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The annual Christmas festival of the Jamaica High School, which took place on Friday afternoon, December 23, was in many respects the most successful the school has ever known. The features were a musical program of exceptional excellence, and the Latin Play, in the production of which the school stands preëminent among the secondary schools of this country.

The Latin Play, which was first given in 1906, and repeated in 1909 and this year, was received with much enthusiastic appreciation by faculty, students, and alumni, and is deserving of detailed description. It is one of the mystery plays of the early twelfth century, Herodes sive Adoratio Magorum, and was so highly esteemed by Queen Victoria that she left money to the famous Winchester Public School to ensure its annual production. Eighty-seven characters took part, twenty-five with speaking lines, and sixty-two who as chorus sang Latin verses. The Prologue was a welcome in Latin, followed by an explanation in English of the value of the play, both religious and educational, and a brief synopsis of the action for the benefit of those who did not know Latin.

The play is intensely dramatic in its conception. Jamaica departs not at all from the original idea of the old monkish author, but has introduced some verses from the ancient Christmas song *Adeste Fideles*, to be sung by the chorus and has taken advantage of all the best traditions of art to create a gorgeous spectacle. The wealth of color in the costumes of the girls, the realistic make-up of the boys, the dignity of the action, and the very sound of the sonorous Latin lines, make upon the audience an impression that is not soon lost.

As its title indicates, the play deals with Herod and the three Wise Men, chiefly, but it begins with the shepherds and angels, with an archangel bidding the shepherds "Fear Not", and a band of lesser angels singing the Gloria. The chorus, singing, enters as the angels leave, and all still singing go towards the cave and disappear to worship the unseen Child. In the old monkish days there was a manger, a child, and the animals. After the shepherds go the Wise Men (Magi) come—following Ben Hur these in Jamaica are Greek, Arab, and Hindu. To the Magi enter first Jewish men and women, then Herod with his suite. Herod's group is the most glowing in its tints and sparkling in its jewels. The number is seven, and the old story of Herod's command to the Wise Men, that they shall tell him where the Royal Babe is to be found, is graphically depicted. When Herod goes, more men and women, all singing, appear, and all follow the Wise Men, who in turn follow the star, to the entrance of the cave. The shepherds re-enter, the Wise Men go to adore the Royal Babe, the crowd surrounds the shepherds to ask what they have seen, but as all turn once more toward the cave the archangel again appears to announce "that all is fulfilled that was declared by the prophets". The Wise Men start to go to Jerusalem, but are forbidden by the angel to seek Herod. Finally, all the characters come upon the stage, sing for the last time the *Adeste*, and then go off, their song gradually dying away in the distance. The archangel, as silence falls, blesses the audience with uplifted hands, the epilogue is pronounced, and the play is over.

A statement appeared recently in one of the papers that DeWitt Clinton High School was the first to produce a Latin play. This is an error, for this play was first produced at Jamaica High four years ago. The pupils in Jamaica High show a considerable interest in the Classics. This is now the sixth year that the Senior Elocution Class (elective) has read the old Greek dramatists in good translations, and just for amusement the Greek Club has given scenes from Frere's *Birds of Aristophanes*, and scenes from Plumptre's *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus.

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### A CORRECTION

Professor E. D. Wright, of Lawrence University, Appleton, Wisconsin, has called my attention to a sad blunder repeated in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 4.83 from my edition of the Aeneid. Professor Wright says: "You quote from your Aeneid, 'A light syllable is one whose vowel is short, by nature or position'. Is a vowel ever short by position? Does position ever change a short vowel into something else?"

I am distressed at this blunder. The fact that I can see exactly how I made it in the first place does not at all relieve my disgust at not having noted the error myself, often as I have read the sentence since it was first written. As a matter of fact, in my teaching I have long proceeded in quite a different way, defining first heavy syllables, then 'common' syllables, and finally remarking that all other syllables are light. The whole purpose of my use of the terms heavy and light for syllables, and long and short for vowels, as well as my discussion of *pater* in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 4.83, is to bring out precisely the point that Professor Wright makes, that nothing ever changes a *vowel* inherently short into anything else, though the *syllable* may be treated as heavy, let us say by 'position'.

C. K.